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SUBJECT: ECOSOC 2007 ORGANIZATIONAL SESSION: THEMES FOR  
2007 HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT TO FOCUS ON POVERTY ERADICATION AND  
RELATED MACRO-ECONOMIC POLICIES

REF: USUN 69

¶1. (U) Meeting in formal session March 2, ECOSOC adopted the themes for the High Level Segment (HLS) that have been under negotiation since December 2006. The themes adopted were unchanged from the ECOSOC President's March 1 proposals.

As 2007 marks the first time ECOSOC will need to operate under a new structure as mandated by GA resolution 61/16 (Strengthening the Economic and Social Council), the discussions were significantly more problematic than in a normal year (2007 is the first year where separate themes for the Thematic Discussion and new Annual Ministerial Review were required). An additional new component to the 2007 HLS, the so-called Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) does not require a formal theme. The announced plan is to hold a ceremonial launching of the DCF in Geneva in 2008, and thereafter to hold the DCF biennially when ECOSOC meets in alternate years New York for summer sessions (2008, 2010, etc).

¶2. (U) Agreed themes are as follows:

Thematic Discussion "Strengthening efforts at all levels to promote pro-poor sustained economic growth, including through equitable macroeconomic policies."

Annual Ministerial Review: "Strengthening efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger, including through the global partnership for development"

Delegations React

¶3. (U) On adoption, USDel noted that it was historic that ECOSOC would devote its first meeting in its new format to a discussion of the importance of macroeconomic policy, and the need for developing countries to have the appropriate national policies in place for assistance to work effectively. USDel also noted that the themes as just adopted were broad in scope and perhaps unfocused, possibly making a negotiated outcome document (Ministerial Declaration) difficult or even impossible to negotiate. In response, the G77 (Pakistan) noted the group's view that the adopted themes were good, and expressed confidence that an outcome document negotiation would be worth the time and energy, even if long. The G-77 believed the themes as agreed covered all levels of economic policies, both national and international (Note: This approach has been a concern of most developed country delegations, and indeed is the rationale behind some G77 intransigence on specific language).

¶4. (U) The EU (Germany) delegation noted that it agreed to the ECOSOC President's proposed themes simply because there was no more time to lose in endless negotiations, believing that additional delay would imperil the success of the new ECOSOC format. The EU felt the themes were focused on national level policies and expressed concern that a lack of

clarity in the language surrounding the phrase "equitable macroeconomic policies" in the thematic discussion would create problems later on this year. Speaking for the CANZ group, Canada noted its desire to ensure success for ECOSOC this year by generating clear themes. Shorter themes would be better for both negotiating and communicating with the public. CANZ was not convinced the themes ECOSOC had just adopted would bring the right mix of high-level participants to Geneva, and stated that it saw the upcoming discussion as focused on national level policy issues related to pro-poor growth.

15. (SBU) Comment: Negotiations on the themes for ECOSOC's new HLS format have been formally in progress since December, but there had even been several discussions in ECOSOC's "Extended Bureau" format (with key member states) held in November. The current track resumed in early January, at which time most developed countries' delegations argued against the need to hold a thematic debate at all in 2007. The G77 resisted any attempt to eliminate that older structure, claiming that this issue was clearly decided in the ECOSOC strengthening resolution - that new ECOSOC structures would simply be added to the old mix, and that no/no rationalization was agreed or required. In the final phases of this negotiation, delegations endured weekly (desperate) pleas from the ECOSOC President and the Secretariat to agree on almost any topic so preparations for

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the July meetings could begin. The G77 was particularly heavy handed in its apparent preference to inject almost nonsensical language into the themes mix at each informal. Part of this can be explained by intra-G77 group dynamics, especially now between the Pakistan chair and Indian experts. Other known voices of reason within that group told us they simply opted out of group discussions, and the result was a collective inability to get clarity on the themes within the

available time.  
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